Pollution at Madras Coast

2463. SHRI PASUMPON THA. KIRUTTINAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Coast Guard ships on pollution control mission to Madras Coast have located scattered oil spill during the recent months;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be taken to prevent pollution thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) to (c) Yes Sir. An oil slick was noticed during routine surveillance by the Coast Guard off the Madras coast on 13th November, 1995. The area of the spill was 4 miles by 3 miles and about 1.5 miles south east of Elliot Beach at Madras. As reported by the Coast Guard, this oil slick is due to Bilge discharge oil by a ship transiting off Madras. Pollution response team from Madras was deployed to detect the source and neutralise the slick immediately. Dispersants were also spread from CG Dornier to neutralise the slick. Coast Guard ship Avviyyar with pollution response equipment and scientists of Central Electro Chemical Research Institute, Karaikudi, Tamil Nadu sailed from Madras on 14th November, 1995 to collect data. Residual slick neutralisation and clean up was also taken up.

Foreign Investment in Petroleum Sector

2464. SHRI SATISH AGARWAL:
SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have resorted to disinvestment of shares/funds as a means of financing revenues deficit instead of using proceeds for restructuring/ development of the public sector units under the control of Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor and whether Government of India have cut policy in this regard; and

(c) what is the present position with regard to the total foreign investment received (country-wise), utilised in oil sector and balance available till 30th November, 1995 for the last two years, year-wise indicating current projects as "joint ventures" in oil and natural gas production, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) and (b): Disinvestment means sale of Government equity shares in Public Sector Undertakings and its proceeds accrue to the Consolidated Fund of India as capital receipts. Public Sector Undertakings are given budgetary support, on merit, for their re-structuring/development. However, such Undertakings under Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, at present have adequate internal and extra-budgetary resources to meet their requirements for re-structuring/ development.

(c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

World Bank Aid for Ahmedabad-Vadodara Expressway NEI Project

2465. SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether work of ROB inthe World Bank aided Ahmedabad-Vadodara Expressway NEI project started in 1987 is in the final stage of its completion;

(b) whether Government of Gujarat has intimated Rs. 374.19 crores as the revised estimate of the project against the origional estimate; and

(c) if so, the funds made available to Gujarat Government as on 30th November, 1995 and proposed to be made available during the rest of the period of its completion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI M. RAJASEKARA MURTHY): (a) and (b): Yes, Sir.

(c) Funds aggregating to Rs. 155.20 crores has been spent as reported for the entire project in question upto 20th November, 1995. However, the remaining funds would be made available in a phased manner keeping in view *inter-alia* availability of resources under the Central Sector Road programme.

Requirement of Cooking Gas in Hill Districts of up

2466. SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA:
SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any survey about the requirement of cooking fuel being used by the people in the eight hill districts of Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether any such survey/ study will be made to assess the requirement of cooking fuel of the people of these districts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) and (c): Oil Companies have been making a continuous assessment of the requirement of LPG in the 8 Hill Districts of Uttar Pradesh. Based on the assessment made as above, all the major places in these districts have been covered for marketing of LPG by opening of LPG distributorships and extension points, in line with the policy for avoiding deforestation in hilly areas.

The Oil Companies are under instructions to clear the entire waiting list (as on 1.4.1995) in areas above 4500 ft. altitude during 1995-96 50% of the waiting list (as on 1.4.1995) in areas between 2000 to 4500 ft. during 1995-96 and the remaining 50% during 1996-97.

It has now been decided to release LPG connections on demand to the consumers from 1.1.1996 for the markets above 4500 ft. altitude and from 1.4.1996 at all places at an altitude beyond 2000 ft.

Amendment in Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and National Forestry Policy, 1988

2467. SMT. KAMLA SINHA:
DR. BAPU KALDATE:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to states:

(a) whether Government have decided to amend the Forests (Conservation) Act, 1980 and National Forest Policy, 1988 for making available forest land to industries/ private organisations for undertaking plantation and for other activities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by Government in this direction so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) to (c) A proposal for "Involvement of Industries in Afforestation of Degraded Forest land" which incorporates certain modifications in the National Forest Policy, 1988 has been projected to the Deptt. by Paper and Pulp Industry for consideration. However, no amendment has been proposed to the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Some State Govts. also had approached the Central Government with suggestions to tap the resources of industries to augment the current afforestation efforts especially in view of the increasing threat of encroachment upon large quantum of degraded forest land in the country, and the need to afforest it urgently in order